

1 **Biophysical considerations in forestry for climate protection**

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34 **Abstract**

35 Forestry, including afforestation, reforestation, avoided deforestation, and forest  
36 management, can sequester atmospheric carbon dioxide and, hence, has been  
37 proposed as a strategy to mitigate climate change. Forestry, however, also influences  
38 land surface properties, including albedo (the amount of sunlight reflected back to  
39 space), surface roughness, and evapotranspiration, all of which affect the amount and  
40 forms of energy transfer to the atmosphere. In some circumstances, these biophysical  
41 feedbacks can warm the climate locally, counteracting the effects of carbon  
42 sequestration on global mean temperature and reducing or eliminating the net value of  
43 climate change mitigation projects. In this paper, we review published and emerging  
44 research that suggests ways in which forestry projects can reduce unintended  
45 consequences associated with biophysical interactions, and highlight knowledge gaps in  
46 managing forests for climate protection. Lastly, we describe several ways to  
47 incorporate biophysical effects into frameworks that use forests as a climate protection  
48 strategy.

49

50 **In a Nutshell**

51

52 -Forestry is becoming an important part of both voluntary carbon markets and  
53 government efforts to mitigate climate change.

54

55 -Forests have biophysical effects that can enhance or counteract the potential for  
56 carbon sequestration to reduce climate warming, and these effects can differ greatly  
57 depending on the spatial scales under consideration.

58

59 -Consideration of both biogeochemical and biophysical effects of forests is needed to  
60 design projects that maximize climate benefits. Broad best practices can be applied  
61 now but the science in support of such an integrated approach is still developing.

62

### 63 **1. Introduction**

64 Forestry (defined here and throughout this paper as practices including  
65 afforestation, reforestation, avoided deforestation, and forest management) is a  
66 potentially important climate change mitigation strategy (Pacala and Socolow 2004;  
67 Canadell and Raupach 2008). With the potential to be a multi-billion dollar industry  
68 (Niles et al. 2002), trading institutions such as the Chicago and European Climate  
69 Exchanges and political entities such as the State of California's Climate Action Registry  
70 (<http://www.climateregistry.org/>) already contract with landowners for biological carbon  
71 sequestration (Hamilton et al. 2009). Also, the Clean Development Mechanism of the  
72 Kyoto Protocol allows organizations from industrialized countries to invest in forestry  
73 within developing countries to accrue carbon credits to offset industrialized emissions.  
74 The Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) plan of the United  
75 Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is expected to provide credits for  
76 avoided deforestation not currently included in the Kyoto Protocol; globally there are

77 now dozens of projects intended to demonstrate the feasibility of REDD. Overall, there  
78 is strong interest in the role of forestry in climate mitigation agreements and legislation  
79 (Schlamadinger and Bird 2007)

80         Forestry can sequester carbon but causes other important biophysical changes  
81 (Figure 1). Forests often have a lower surface albedo than the ecosystem they replace,  
82 thus absorbing more solar radiation (Betts 2000). They can also affect other  
83 biophysical parameters, including surface roughness, which influences the exchange of  
84 energy and mass between the land surface and the atmosphere, and the amount of  
85 water recycled to the atmosphere through evapotranspiration (Bonan 1997). These  
86 changes affect climate at a variety of scales and can enhance or counteract the climate  
87 benefits from forest carbon sequestration (Marland et al. 2003). Resulting climate  
88 changes may themselves affect the permanence of stored forest carbon (Subak 2002).

89         Climate policies currently being established focus solely on greenhouse gases  
90 and do not reflect the net impact of biophysical changes that come, often unintended,  
91 with changes in land use. While research on the net climate effects of forestry is still in  
92 early stages, current knowledge and scientific first principles can already offer some  
93 guidance on the development of sound mitigation policies. Here we review the relevant  
94 literature to make suggestions for maximizing the effectiveness of forest projects for  
95 climate protection. We also briefly address crucial non-climate aspects, such as  
96 ecosystem services, human land-use needs, and biodiversity that are critical to  
97 successful forestry.

98

99 **2. Considerations for maximizing the climate benefits of forestry**

100 *2.1. Consider complete carbon sequestration potential of an individual project*

101 Afforestation leads to carbon accumulation in living biomass, coarse woody  
102 debris, and soil organic carbon (SOC) with the relative importance of accumulation in  
103 these pools varying considerably across different biomes. Potential rates of carbon  
104 accumulation in living biomass are generally the highest in tropical forest regions and  
105 decrease toward the poles (Grace 2004). Large regional variations are possible,  
106 however, such as old-growth temperate forests in the Pacific Northwest of the U.S. that  
107 can store the same amount of carbon in living biomass as similarly aged tropical forests  
108 (Hudiburg et al. 2009). SOC sequestration potential depends on the history of land use,  
109 soil texture, climate, and the species of trees used in forestry projects. Greater SOC  
110 gains are found in soils with more clay, previous land use with greater soil disturbance  
111 (e.g. cropland), cooler climate (e.g. slowing decomposition losses), and the use of  
112 deciduous trees; smaller increases occur when forests replace grasslands or pastures  
113 (Laganière et al. 2010). Large SOC accumulations are often found in older boreal  
114 forests (Harden et al. 2000). The variability in living biomass and SOC suggests that  
115 the rate and total carbon storage capacity above- and belowground should be  
116 estimated for a given project.

117

118 *2.2. Large-scale tropical forestry likely has the largest climate benefits*

119 Tropical forestry has the clearest climate benefits of any forestry projects. This  
120 conclusion arises because tropical forests have high globally-averaged carbon storage

121 and uptake per unit area, cover the greatest amount of land, and are responsible for  
122 the largest net cooling of any biome (Table 1) (Grace 2004, Bala et al. 2007). Further,  
123 tropical deforestation currently accounts for over 90% of the net carbon emissions from  
124 land use change (Houghton 2003); therefore avoided tropical deforestation reduces  
125 anthropogenic carbon emissions from land use change (Gullison et al. 2007).

126 Tropical forests' value for cooling local and regional temperatures (relative to  
127 grasslands) has long been recognized (e.g. Shukla et al. 1990). Tropical forests have  
128 high rates of transpiration that contribute to cloud formation, considerably reducing  
129 both the amount of sunlight reaching the Earth's surface and surface temperatures.  
130 Modeling experiments have consistently shown that tropical deforestation increases  
131 surface radiation, reduces evapotranspiration and surface roughness, and raises surface  
132 temperatures (Zeng et al. 1996, Werth and Avissar 2002, Bala et al. 2007). In an  
133 extreme, idealized case, Bala et al. (2007) showed that a complete tropical  
134 deforestation could increase global land temperatures by 0.9 K, while temperate  
135 deforestation had a near zero effect and boreal deforestation had a cooling effect on  
136 global temperatures. In the context of the large current emissions from tropical  
137 deforestation, the size of the tropical forest carbon pool, and the dual cooling nature of  
138 tropical forests, reforesting tropical areas and preventing existing tropical forests from  
139 destruction may have the largest global climate impact of any forestry project.

140

141 *2.3. Limited water availability may reduce the biophysical cooling effect of trees*

142           Afforestation, the planting of trees on land where they have not recently existed,  
143 is another tool for sequestering carbon. Some afforestation projects will likely occur in  
144 water-limited regions (defined here as locations where potential evapotranspiration is  
145 greater than precipitation). Conifers have been planted in locations with as little as  
146 ~300 mm precipitation per year, thus potentially opening large regions of the Earth to  
147 potential afforestation (Grunzweig et al. 2003, Law et al. 2003). However, these forests  
148 may reduce surface albedo (Fig. 2, Field et al. 2007) and increase surface roughness  
149 compared to the ecosystems they replace, thus absorbing more solar radiation and  
150 more effectively transferring energy from the surface to the atmosphere via convection.  
151 A disproportionate amount of available energy in water-limited forests is partitioned into  
152 sensible heat (energy transferred by convection of warmer air from the surface)  
153 (Baldocchi et al. 2004); this results in warmer local, and possibly regional, air  
154 temperatures.

155           Cooling biophysical effects will likely grow along a gradient of little to ample  
156 water availability. Model simulations (e.g. Werth and Avissar 2002) indicate that in  
157 tropical environments with ample water, afforestation cools the Earth through low-  
158 altitude cloud formation. The net effect of increased evaporation in temperate and  
159 tropical environments with ample water is likely to be a cooling, viewed from regional  
160 and global perspectives. The net climate effect of afforestation in water-limited regions  
161 is unclear.

162



163 *2.4. Afforestation in snow-covered regions may have regional warming effects that*  
164 *counter the global cooling effects of carbon sequestration*

165 Compared to other natural surfaces, snow has a high albedo and reduces the  
166 amount of energy absorbed at the surface. Figure 3 shows the seasonal impact of  
167 snow on albedo during winter. Short canopy ecosystems, such as grasses and crops, in  
168 northern latitudes have albedos that approach 0.6 when covered by snow during winter  
169 (Fig. 2a), exceeding summer albedo by a factor of 2 to 3 (Fig. 2b). In contrast, forests  
170 in the same region have winter albedos that are substantially lower because darker tree  
171 canopies obscure snow and absorb radiation. Not surprisingly, deciduous forests tend  
172 to reduce albedo less than coniferous forests during winter (Liu and Randerson 2008,  
173 McMillan and Goulden 2008, Jackson et al. 2008), probably both from increased stem  
174 reflectance and greater exposure of surface snow below leafless canopies. The albedo  
175 effect of forests is amplified in boreal regions and at high elevations where snow  
176 persists into spring (e.g., Montenegro et al. 2009). Modeling studies on boreal  
177 deforestation have suggested that considerable cooling would occur when both carbon  
178 and biophysical climate interactions are included (Bala et al. 2007, Betts 2000). Fire  
179 has also been shown to have a net cooling effect in boreal forests due to a similar  
180 increase in mean long-term albedo that counters carbon losses (Randerson et al. 2006).  
181 The net effect of afforestation on regions with intermediate snow cover, such as the  
182 northern half of the continental U.S., is unclear at this time (Jackson et al. 2008). The  
183 uncertainty arises, in part, from counteracting effects of forestry on ET and albedo, and  
184 the difficulty of parameterizing the processes that regulate this net balance in climate

185 models. Modeling results indicate that the net effect in mid-latitude regions may be  
186 near zero (Bala et al. 2007).

187

188 *2.5. Deciduous broadleaf trees may be more effective at cooling than evergreen*  
189 *conifers.*

190         Deciduous tree species have two properties that may make them more effective  
191 for cooling. First, deciduous forests have a summer albedo that can be up to 0.1 (10%)  
192 higher than coniferous forests depending upon the region (Fig. 2, Eugster et al. 2000,  
193 Breuer et al. 2003, Jackson et al. 2008). Second, studies of deciduous broadleaf forests  
194 have shown that they have canopy conductances (the ease at which plants transpire  
195 water) and an evaporative fraction (the fraction of available radiation that is used to  
196 evaporate water) that is approximately twice that of coniferous forests during mid-  
197 summer (Eugster et al. 2000, Breuer et al. 2003). This additional transpiration from  
198 deciduous canopies results in local cooling and possible cloud formation that could  
199 increase albedo and reduce temperatures when incoming solar radiation is near its  
200 maximum annual value. The effect of deciduous cover on evaporation and energy  
201 exchange also depends on the length and timing of leaf cover (Wilson and Baldocchi  
202 2000). Coniferous species tend to sequester slightly more (<5-10%) carbon than  
203 deciduous species in the same region, but this difference is less significant than inter-  
204 regional differences or differences resulting from management practices (Bateman and  
205 Lovett 2000). When appropriate for the region, deciduous species may offer additional  
206 biophysical cooling compared to coniferous species.

207

208 *2.6. Consider effects of forests on regional climate*

209 Forest removal or addition alters (1) surface roughness, temperature, and  
210 albedo, (2) planetary boundary layer height, and (3) soil-atmosphere coupling, which  
211 can affect local and regional climate in diverse ways. For example, models of  
212 afforestation in the Mediterranean show an increase in winter evaporation, winter  
213 precipitation, and summer temperature with afforestation (Gates and Liess 2001).  
214 Deforestation data and modeling in Australia show that both evaporation and  
215 precipitation decline but temperatures increase (Pitman et al. 2004). In contrast,  
216 models of land use change in temperate Europe show that forest to crop conversions  
217 decrease midday temperatures and increase summer evaporation due to higher crop  
218 stomatal conductance and albedo (Zhao and Pitman 2002). In addition to mean climate  
219 conditions, modeling studies have shown that afforestation changes diurnal climate  
220 variability, including a reduction in the diurnal temperature range and an increase in the  
221 dew-point temperature range (Wichansky et al. 2008).

222 Forestry could enhance or dampen the regional effects of climate change.  
223 Decreases in runoff with afforestation, for example, could further stress regional water  
224 resources (Jackson et al. 2005). However, accompanying precipitation increases in a  
225 drier region like Western Australia would be greatly beneficial to society (Pitman et al.  
226 2004). Thus, considering regional climate when designing large-scale afforestation  
227 programs is crucial. These examples show that forestry practices can affect the  
228 hydrological cycle in important ways, and that temperature should not be the only

229 metric considered. Investments in regional climate modeling studies and field  
230 measurements during the design of forestry projects may help to quantify region-  
231 specific responses to land-surface changes.

232

233 *2.7. Least-intensive management practices may reduce the risk that forestry for carbon*  
234 *sequestration will have counteracting climate effects*

235 Forest management practices, such as fertilization, monoculture planting, and  
236 thinning, can reduce the benefits of carbon sinks in multiple ways. First, applying  
237 fertilizers can boost both the rate and capacity of sequestration, but significantly  
238 increases soil emissions of nitrous oxide (Smith and Conen 2004). Given that nitrous  
239 oxide has a 100-year greenhouse warming potential (GWP) about 300 times that of  
240 carbon dioxide, and methane has a GWP of 20 to 25, practices that result in slightly  
241 more nitrous oxide or methane emissions could disproportionately offset the cooling  
242 effects from forest carbon sequestration (e.g., Schulze et al. 2009). Second, conversion  
243 of native forests to plantations can increase runoff and reduce evapotranspiration,  
244 especially in the early stages of plantation growth (Fahey and Jackson, 1997), and thus  
245 reducing biophysical cooling (see section 2.3) relative to the native forest.

246 Finally, carbon emissions from energy used to manage forests, including tailpipe  
247 emissions from trucks and tractors, are typically greater in intensively managed forests.  
248 However, energy production from forestry products might indirectly mitigate climate  
249 change by reducing carbon emissions from fossil fuel burning. It is crucial to extend

250 cost-benefit analyses to include net greenhouse gas emissions from management  
251 activities over the whole life cycle of the proposed project.

252

### 253 *2.8. Consider the resiliency of forest projects to future climate change*

254 Future climate change is expected to have substantial and varying effects on  
255 temperature and precipitation across the globe, and there is considerable uncertainty in  
256 the magnitude of these effects at regional and local scales. Climate change has the  
257 potential to alter forest structure and carbon storage (e.g. Dale et al. 2001). Moreover,  
258 climate change may reduce carbon storage via increased disturbance associated with  
259 more intense hurricanes (Juarez et al. 2006), fire (Westerling et al. 2006), insect  
260 attacks (Seidl et al. 2008), or drought (van Mantgem et al. 2009). To diminish the  
261 chance that climate-induced physiological stress or disturbance reduces carbon storage,  
262 afforestation projects should use species and practices that recognize and adapt to  
263 future climate and disturbances (Millar et al. 2007, Galik and Jackson 2009). For  
264 example, project managers could plant species that are currently outside their optimal  
265 climate range, but that will succeed in a region's future climate. Carbon accounting  
266 rules may also need to be revised to encourage practices that result in stable long-term  
267 growth and minimize disturbances.

268

### 269 *2.9. Urban forests can provide local cooling and reduce anthropogenic energy use.*

270 In addition to sequestering carbon, planting trees around and within urban areas  
271 can reduce building energy use and associated carbon emissions. Deciduous trees that

272 shade a building during summer reduce the incoming radiation absorbed by the  
273 building, thus reducing energy use for air conditioning, while allowing passive heating  
274 during winter (Akbari 2002). In winter, evergreen trees that act as windbreaks can  
275 reduce air infiltration, reducing the energy needed for heating (Liu and Harris 2008).  
276 Liu and Harris (2008) found an energy reduction of ~20% for winter heating in  
277 Scotland due to the effect of trees as windbreaks. Akbari (2002) found a reduction of  
278 carbon emissions of 18 kg C per year per tree in Los Angeles, California due to direct  
279 shading and cooling of buildings, which was 3 to 5 times the carbon sequestration per  
280 planted tree.

281 In addition to direct effects of shading, widespread planting of trees in urban  
282 areas can result in lower air temperatures by changing regional-scale land surface  
283 energy fluxes. Model results indicate that if tree planting were adopted across an entire  
284 urban area, enhanced latent heat fluxes would decrease surface air temperatures near  
285 the urban center by 1-3 K, thus leading to additional reductions in energy use (Akbari et  
286 al. 2002). However, urban trees often require irrigation, which can increase  
287 greenhouse gases emissions associated with water transport and regional water  
288 management.

289

290 *2.10. Social, economic, and biological sustainability criteria are crucial factors to*  
291 *consider in forest project design.*

292 Forestry, like any land transformation, might lead to unintended environmental  
293 and socioeconomic consequences, which could jeopardize the long-term success of

294 projects (Canadell and Raupach 2008). Frameworks and standards have been  
295 proposed to assess social, ecological and biological sustainability of afforestation  
296 projects and their compliance with international agreements (Madlener et al. 2006,  
297 Merger 2008). Biological sustainability includes factors such as ecosystem services (e.g.  
298 water and air purification) and biodiversity conservation or enhancement. Forestry's  
299 impact on water availability and soil salinity should be considered as forest projects in  
300 semi-arid regions can transpire more water than is provided by precipitation and  
301 infiltration, thus resulting in unsustainable use of groundwater and salinization (Jobbágy  
302 and Jackson 2004). Cannell (1999) showed that both ecosystem services and  
303 biodiversity would suffer if monoculture forest plantations replaced diverse natural  
304 ecosystems; however, the impact would be less if afforestation replaced other highly  
305 managed ecosystems such as marginal cropland. Social sustainability factors include  
306 ensuring that local forests improve the livelihoods of nearby residents without taking  
307 away services provided by the previous land uses (e.g. crop or grazing land for  
308 affordable food). Gaining local support and involvement from people is important.  
309 Hunter et al. (1998) provide a case study in India where failure to ensure social  
310 sustainability resulted in eventual deforestation of afforested "marginal" land. Forest  
311 projects are likely to be unsuccessful for climate mitigation if they fail to promote  
312 economic, social, and environmental sustainable well-being.

313

### 314 **3. Future directions**

315 The issues of carbon storage, forest permanence and resilience, social, ecological  
316 and economic sustainability, and urban forestry intersect with a critical set of additional  
317 considerations related to the impact of forestry activities on landscape properties that  
318 impact climate. Key challenges include:

319

320 i. *How can the biophysical climate impacts of forestry be compared to the climate*  
321 *impacts of carbon sequestration? Should existing metrics that convert the radiative*  
322 *impact of a surface change into a carbon equivalent (e.g., Betts et al. 2000) be used*  
323 *knowing that these metrics cannot capture non-radiative effects such as changes in*  
324 *precipitation? Or should both radiative and non-radiative climate effects be considered*  
325 *in terms of their impacts on ecosystem services?* This is particularly challenging given  
326 that climate impacts from changes in surface biophysics may not be of the same  
327 direction at local, regional and global scales. Furthermore, biophysical and  
328 biogeochemical changes have a very different temporal character; for example, carbon  
329 dioxide emissions produce long-lasting effects on atmospheric concentrations and thus  
330 have lasting effects on climate, whereas climate effects of albedo changes typically last  
331 only as long as that albedo change is maintained. Thus, a judgment must be made on  
332 how best to compare the value of changes at different times and places. Simple metrics  
333 such as effect on global mean temperature may not capture key issues that matter  
334 most to humans.

335



336 ii. *How can the biophysical impacts of forestry be incorporated into climate change*  
337 *mitigation strategies? Should the biophysical impacts of forests be best viewed as a*  
338 *separate criterion for crediting forest projects (i.e. accredited mitigation projects need*  
339 *to demonstrate the creation of biophysical climate cooling effects, in the same way*  
340 *current projects need to demonstrate carbon sequestration)? Or should the biophysical*  
341 *impacts be viewed as an additional credit/discount to sequestration credits and*  
342 *management practices (e.g., Thompson et al. 2009)?* For example, if the project  
343 causes biophysical cooling, it could be allowed additional credits equal to the carbon  
344 value of its physical benefits, whereas if it causes warming, a discount rate could be  
345 applied to the project proportional to the physical warming created.

346

347 These questions require further research in order to assess forestry's impact on  
348 climate comprehensively and how best take into account biophysical effects through  
349 accounting rules and further development of climate change policies. However,  
350 because forest projects are already being certified for carbon credits, there is an  
351 immediate need for knowledge on the potential biophysical impacts of forestry.

352 To illustrate the possible effect of biophysical changes on the suitability of land  
353 for forestry for climate protection, we have constructed maps of three factors known to  
354 have considerable impact on the climate impacts of forests: background albedo, snow  
355 cover, and water availability (Fig. 4). All maps are at 0.5-degree resolution because this  
356 is the highest resolution data set available for water availability. Furthermore, the snow-  
357 free surface-albedo map (Fig. 4b) contains significant sub-grid variability that could

358 mask locations that have significantly different albedo. For example, a pixel could  
359 contain mostly dark forests, but have deforested locations with higher albedos.  
360 Afforestation in these deforested locations would then reduce albedo, absorbing more  
361 radiation. It is important for project planners to consider the pre-project surface albedo  
362 relative to the albedo of the planned forest.

363         Regions that have multiple factors that would tend to lead to forest-induced  
364 cooling, such as the southeastern U.S., Southern China, and other coastal regions (Fig.  
365 4), may be locations where forestry for climate mitigation would gain the most from  
366 biophysical cooling effects. These areas have low existing surface albedo, high  
367 availability of water, and little snow cover, resulting in less potential additional radiation  
368 being absorbed and greater potential for evaporative and cloud feedback cooling from  
369 increased transpiration with forestry. Most of these regions have or had significant  
370 forest cover, which suggests that avoided deforestation or reforestation may be more  
371 successful at protecting climate than afforestation elsewhere. However, even in these  
372 areas, models do not agree whether forests would biophysically cool or warm. There is  
373 an urgent need to reduce this uncertainty. In contrast, regions that have high surface  
374 albedo and low water availability (Figs. 4b and 4c) or high snow cover (Fig. 4a) might  
375 be less suitable.

376

#### 377 **4. Summary**

378         Forestry is a likely strategy to mitigate climate change. To be effective in this  
379 role, forests need to sequester carbon or reduce fossil fuel burning through bio-energy

380 production while avoiding biophysical effects that would jeopardize the net climate  
381 benefits and long-term sustainability of the projects from environmental, social and  
382 economic consideration. Successful forest projects will likely have three characteristics:

383

384 • They will have a net greenhouse gas balance more favorable than the  
385 ecosystems they replace, and their carbon storage will be resilient in a future  
386 climate and forest disturbance regime.

387

388 • They will have biophysical effects that cool the Earth relative to the  
389 ecosystems they replace.

390

391 • They will provide ecosystem services, biodiversity, economic livelihoods,  
392 and other benefits that enhance the quality of life for people, thus ensuring  
393 that landowners and users have an incentive to maintain forests for  
394 sequestration. They may also buffer human settlements from local climate  
395 change by reducing heating and cooling requirements in dwellings, thus  
396 reducing energy use and associated carbon emissions.

397

398 Regional experiments and modeling that compare biophysical and biogeochemical  
399 forcings and feedbacks associated with forest manipulations are a useful approach for  
400 assessing the full climate effect of forestry but require significant additional investment.

401 The science on forestry's climate effects is still relatively young and requires a major

402 expansion to support policy development. Sound science-based policy can help optimize  
403 forestry's climate benefits, while mitigating its costs.

404

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417

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628 Table 1: Area and carbon stored in vegetation of select biomes.

Ecosystem	Area (millions km <sup>2</sup> )	Total carbon (Gigatons)	Carbon per unit area (kg*m <sup>-2</sup> )
Tropical Forests	17.5	553	31.6
Temperate Forests	10.4	292	28.1
Boreal Forests	13.7	395	28.8
Crops	13.5	15	1.1
Tropical Grasslands	27.6	326	11.8
Temperate Grasslands	15	182	12.3

629 Area and total carbon storage data from Grace (2004). Total carbon storage includes  
630 vegetation and soil organic matter.

631

632 Figure 1: Qualitative illustration of effects of forest and non-forest ecosystems on  
633 surface energy fluxes in tropical, temperate summer, temperate winter, boreal summer,  
634 and boreal winter scenarios. Forests have greater heat fluxes than non-forest  
635 ecosystems due to their greater surface roughness. Tropical rainforests have large  
636 latent heat fluxes that result in cloud development reflecting solar radiation back to  
637 space. Temperate and boreal forests have major seasonal variations in energy fluxes  
638 and can reduce seasonal cooling by masking the snow. Illustration by Victor Leshyk,  
639 Bilby Research Center, Northern Arizona University.

640

641 Figure 2: Satellite observations of zonally averaged shortwave surface albedo for select  
642 land cover types and latitudes for winter (a) and summer (b) in 2004. The albedo data  
643 were obtained from MODerate resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS)  
644 measurements of black sky albedo (MCD43C3 version 5 - Schaaf et al. 2002) and span  
645 16-day intervals. The albedo observations were averaged within International  
646 Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP) land cover classes (MOD12C1 version 4)  
647 developed using concurrent MODIS surface reflectance observations (Friedl et al. 2002).  
648 We only sampled grid cells at  $0.05^\circ$  resolution that were composed of greater than  
649 80% of a single IGBP vegetation class. We then zonally averaged these data within  $5^\circ$   
650 bins of latitude for zones with more than 10 pixels of a vegetation class.

651

652 Figure 3: A photograph illustrating the impact of differing forest cover on effective  
653 albedo during winter. Denser forest cover reduces snow exposure and absorbs more  
654 solar radiation. These forests are a part of the Montane Alternative Silviculture Systems  
655 Study in British Columbia, Canada, which was designed to assess the ecological impact  
656 of different logging regimes (Mitchell et al. 2004). The photo is courtesy of the  
657 Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada.

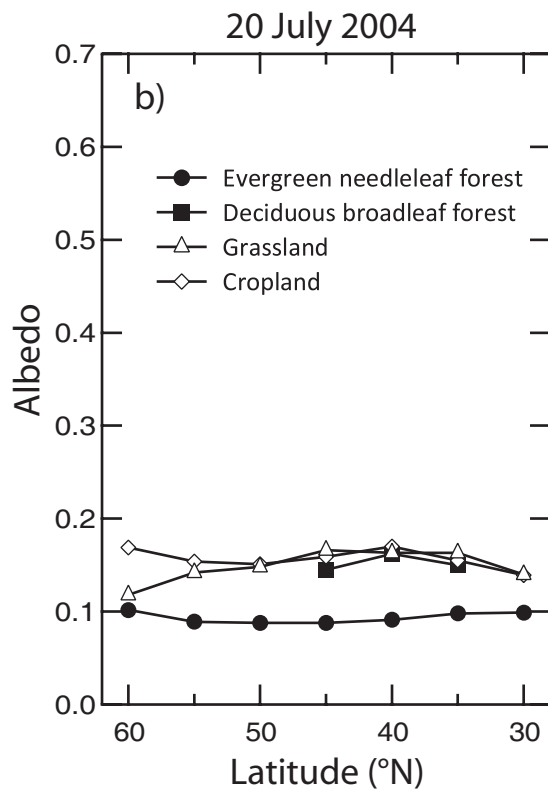
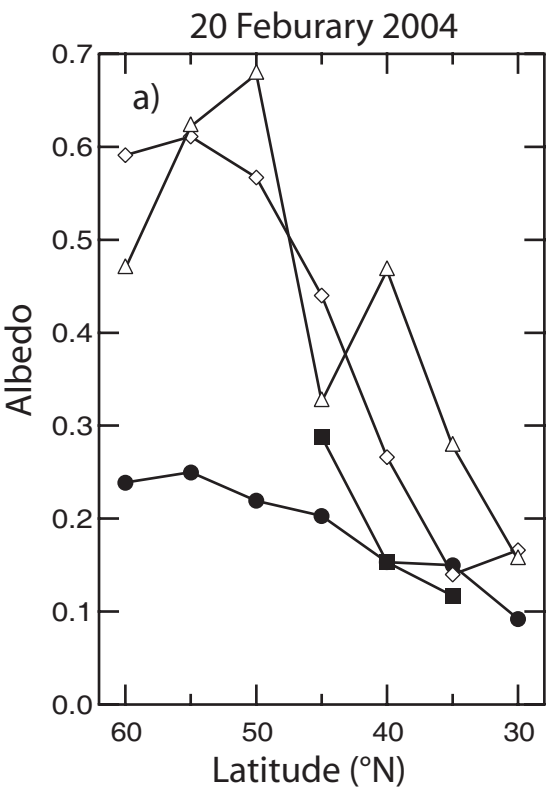
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659 Figure 4: Annually averaged values for snow cover, snow-free background albedo, and  
660 water availability. Color ramp provides qualitative evaluation of temperature changes  
661 with forestry for each variable. Light colors indicate areas that are more suitable for

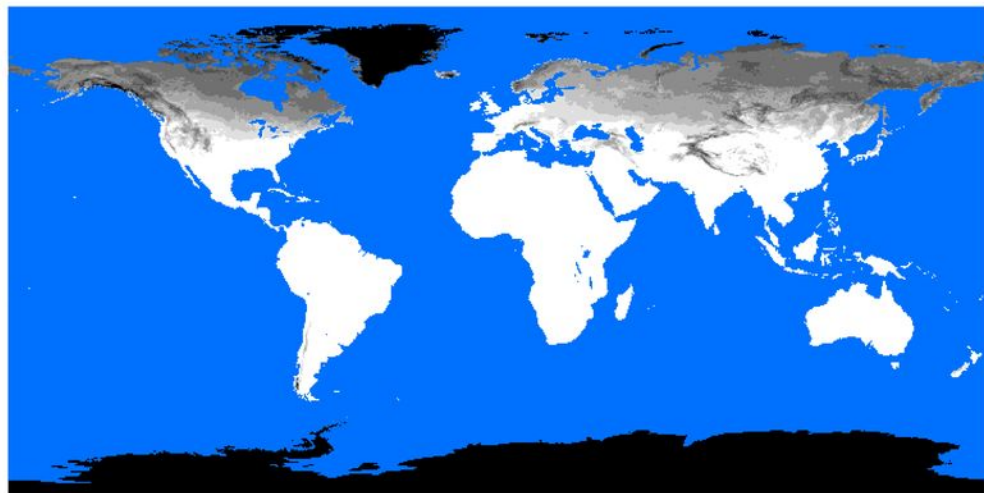


662 afforestation than dark colored areas. 4a: Map of average snow cover for calendar  
663 years 2001-2008. Snow covered obtained MODIS (MCD43C3 version 5). All data from  
664 MCD43C3 0.05-degree resolution resampled to 0.5-degree resolution. Snow  
665 measurements were average over 2001-2008 to determine the average fraction of the  
666 year with surface snow cover. 4b: Snow free surface albedo. Snow free pixels from  
667 the MODIS MCD43C3 version 5 black sky shortwave albedo were annually averaged to  
668 obtain albedo. Figure 4c. Map of water availability determined from the ratio of  
669 precipitation (P) over potential evapotranspiration (PET). Precipitation and PET data  
670 are for 1950-1999 from Wilmont and Matsuura (2001).









Percent year snow cover



**a)**

90-100

80-90

70-80

60-70

50-60

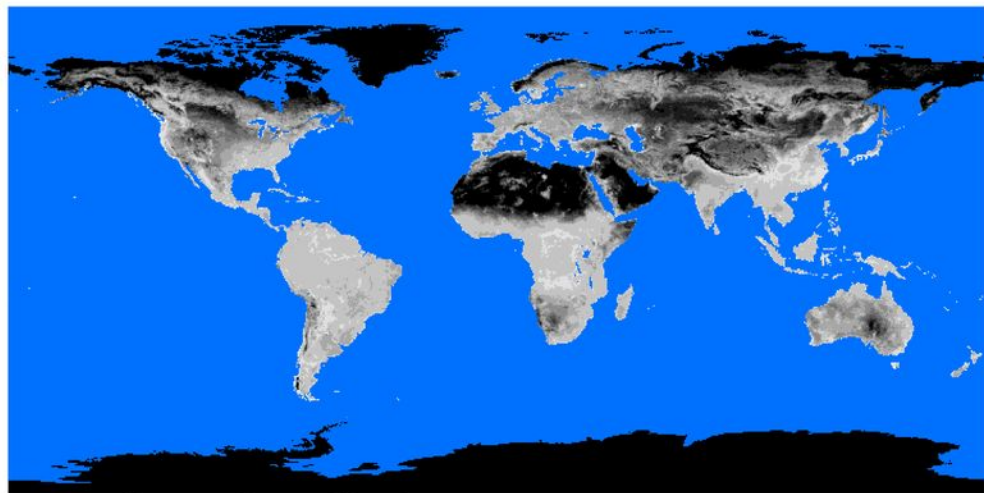
40-50

30-40

20-30

10-20

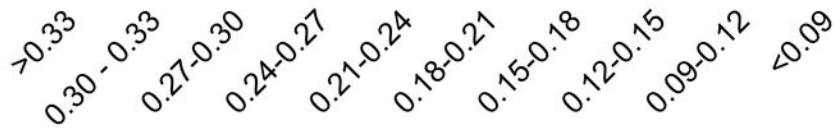
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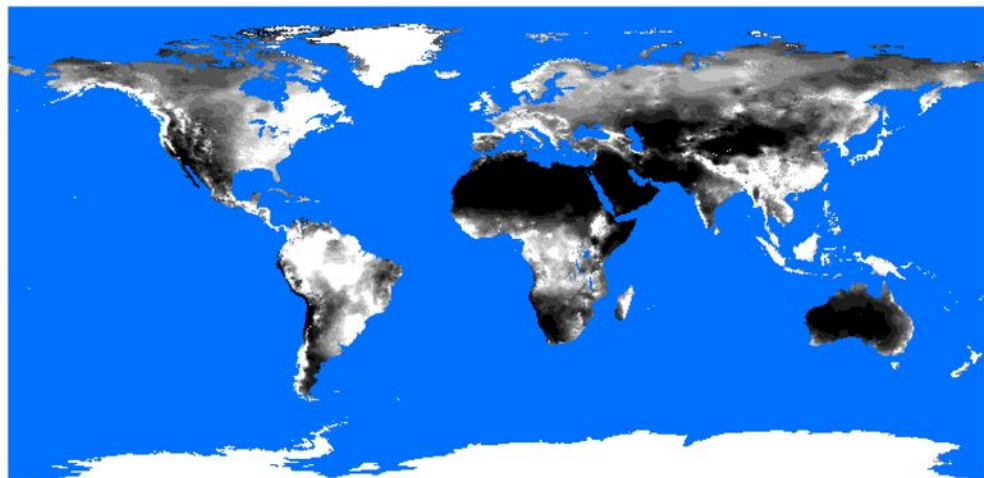


**Snow-free albedo**



**b)**





**P:PET ratio**



**c)**

0.00 - 0.25  
0.25 - 0.40  
0.40 - 0.55  
0.55 - 0.70  
0.70 - 0.85  
0.85 - 1.00  
1.00 - 1.15  
1.15 - 1.30  
1.30 - 1.45  
>1.45